

EVENTS CALENDAR



Mershon Center Speaker Series



TARAK BARKAWI

Combat and Historiography in the Battle of Sangshak

Thursday, March 23, 2017, 12:00PM - 1:30PM

The Mershon Center for International Security Studies

1501 Neil Avenue, Room 120

Columbus, Ohio 43201

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Tarak Barkawi is a reader in the Department of International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science. He studies warfare between the West and the non-European world, past and present. He taught British and U.S. military officers for a decade at the University of Cambridge. He writes on the pivotal place of armed force in globalization, imperialism, and modernization, and on the neglected significance of war in social and political theory. He is author of *Globalization and War* and many scholarly articles. His book on the Indian and British armies in World War II, *Soldiers of Empire*, is forthcoming on Cambridge University Press. Barkawi was a postdoctoral fellow at the Mershon Center in 2006-07.



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Abstract

Produced by soldiers and veterans, the materials through which we seek to understand war carry war's antagonisms; they are shaped by fighting, by specific battles, by old debts and lost arguments between commanders, invoiced in the lives of their soldiers. In a way, military historiography is too close to its own subject matter. Clarity demands an exacting reflexivity, of a kind evident in the life and work of Louis Allen, a Japanese-speaking British military intelligence officer who participated in the Burma campaign and wrote its standard account, *Burma: The Longest War 1941-45*. Between the first and second editions of that book, Allen became embroiled in historiographical disagreement with veterans of the Battle of Sangshak. He helps guide us through some of the ways in which history is a continuation of war by other means.

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